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In Enduring Heritage

Caring for the Past on the
Santa Fe National Forest

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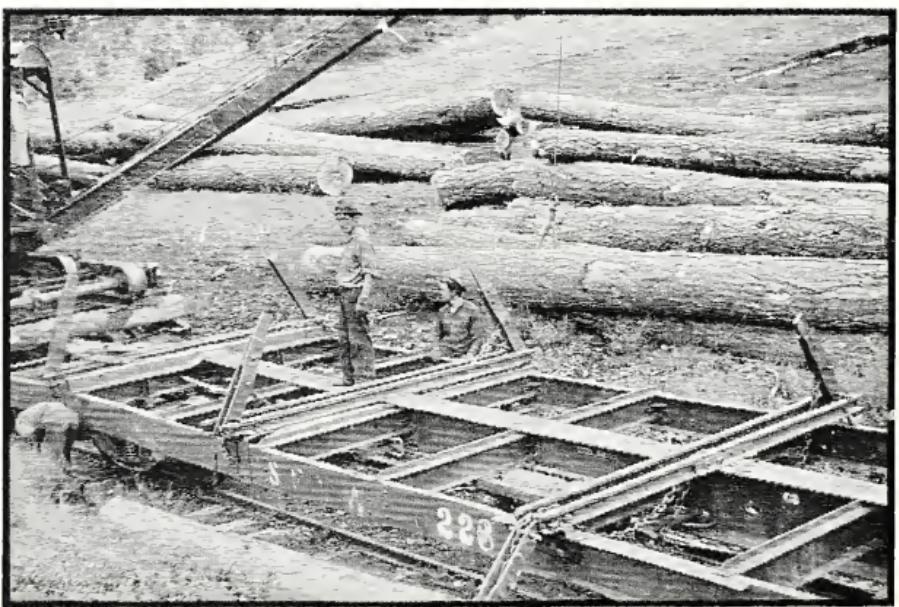
United States
Department of
Agriculture

PREPARED BY
Forest
Service

Southwestern
Region



San Ildefonso ca. 1910. Lab of Anthropology #70.4/174.



Yale Weinstein Collection.

The Land and Its People

Beginning at least 12,000 years ago American Indian groups were hunting and foraging in the mountains and river valleys of northern New Mexico. Culture change came gradually through thousands of years of adaptation to changing social and environmental conditions. With the adoption of agriculture some 1,500 years ago, there eventually emerged a way of life based upon year-round settlement in large pueblo villages. These prehistoric groups were the ancestors of Pueblo Indians living along the Rio Grande today.

With the arrival of Europeans in the late 1500s, the American Indian way of life in the Southwest changed forever. After years of hardships and conflict, however, the two cultures reached a level of accommodation and cooperation. Each borrowed from and contributed to the richness of the other. Spanish settlers brought with them a way of life based upon farming, ranching and mining. Forest lands were essential for grazing, firewood harvest, and many other uses.

Additional dramatic change came with an influx of large numbers of Anglo Americans after the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, which made New Mexico a part of the United States. These newcomers continued farming and ranching but added various military and industrial pursuits to the New Mexico way of life. The Santa Fe Trail and the coming of the railroads opened new markets for New Mexico products. One result was a gradual shift from a subsistence way of life to a cash economy. Still, in the forests of today, many traditional uses continue alongside more recent commercial and recreational activities.

As peoples of these three groups came to share the land, to work side by side and to intermarry, there arose the unique blend of previously separate traditions that give northern New Mexico the distinctive cultural flavor it has today. The traces of human groups who occupied northern New Mexico over passing centuries can be found in numerous archeological sites. Such heritage resources are abundant on lands of the Santa Fe National Forest.

Components of the Heritage Program

- Identification in the Forest Plan of over 40,000 acres on which heritage resources are given primary consideration.
- Continuing site inventory to locate as yet undiscovered sites.
- Nomination of significant sites to the National Register of Historic Places.
- Stabilization and restoration of sites damaged by natural and human forces.
- Law enforcement program aimed at site protection and vigorous prosecution of looters.
- Site interpretation, guided tours, lectures and hands-on demonstrations for public information and education.
- Volunteer programs that encourage public participation in heritage management projects.
- Partnerships with museums and universities to document and explore the past.
- Cooperation with the research branch of the Forest Service to develop new knowledge and techniques for improved management.
- Search for ways to apply both old and new technologies, from satellites to hot air balloons.





What are the traces of the past?

For most of the 12,000 years of human life in what is now the Santa Fe National Forest, people had no form of written communication. Even when Europeans arrived, written accounts often overlooked the events of everyday life. Yet prehistoric people, as well as ordinary folks during historic times, did leave a record of their passing. It is a special kind of record consisting of the artifacts and sites they left behind. Sites include scatters of stone tools and broken pottery, single-room surface structures, pithouses, rock carvings and paintings, giant pueblo ruins with thousands of rooms, and abandoned homesteads, to name but a few.



Traces of

What can we learn from these remains?

Through careful study, archaeologists can "read" this record, uncovering clues to how past people lived, what foods they ate, how they constructed their homes, and what items they traded and with whom. This information, plus that provided by historians, anthropologists, and in some cases by living descendants of past people, are helping unlock the story of what life was like long ago. Still, much remains to be learned about how past people lived with the land and with each other. Hopefully this knowledge will help our own society deal with these same challenges today.



the Past



How is the Santa Fe caring for the past?

To date over 6,000 sites have been located and recorded by archeologists on the Santa Fe National Forest; it is estimated that there may be as many as 30,000 more. Some of these are among the most significant to be found in North America.

Caring for these irreplaceable heritage resources is one of the important goals of the Santa Fe National Forest. To meet this goal the forest has developed a broad, exciting program of heritage resources management.

Through its heritage program, the Santa Fe National Forest recognizes its responsibility to both safeguard and share the past with the American people. The past belongs to all of us. Take a look! You may want to become a part of this important effort!



Interpretation

Members of the public are invited to visit sites like Poshuouinge where interpretive information is provided.



National Register of Historic Places

Over 50 sites, such as this historic logging camp, have been listed on the National Register.



Volunteer Programs

"Passport in Time" volunteers assist in the construction of a replica of a prehistoric Gallina Culture house.



Public Programs

Programs such as this demonstration of stone tool-making help make the past come alive.



Stabilization

The site stabilization program is focused upon sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Site Inventory

Over 6,000 sites have been recorded thus far on the Santa Fe. As many as 30,000 more may exist.



Partnership Projects

Through a partnership with the Maxwell Museum, rock art is recorded in the "Ancient Billboards" project.



A Diverse Program of



Heritage Resources Management



Experimental Archeology

Photographing archeological features from a hot air balloon for the Kwastiyukwa Interdisciplinary Archeological Project.



Research

Archeologists from the Museum of New Mexico study the effects of fire on heritage resources sites in cooperation with the Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station.

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Help Protect Your Heritage

The heritage resources of the National Forests provide the keys to understanding and interpreting the lives and times of people who lived long ago. But heritage resources are fragile and, once damaged, can never be repaired or replaced; the information they could have provided is lost forever.

Enjoy your visit to the National Forest but remember heritage resources are protected under the Antiquities Act of 1906 and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979. Collecting artifacts or disturbing sites is a crime. You can help preserve the past by reporting illegal activities to forest managers.

A Windows on the Past Project

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